

LINES FOR LITTLE FOLK.

(By OCTAVE THANET in *McClure's Magazine*.)

THE Wilds lived in a two-roomed log cabin in the great gum woods, only two miles from a railway village, they rented their land, paying rent in the corn and cotton of their raising. They owned ten pigs and a cow, and Mr Ormond, their landlord, allowed them the use of a pair of mules. Fuel is to be had for the gathering in the forest, while fruit and vegetables grow almost of their own motion in Arkansas. But their was little enough money kept in the widow's old stocking—purse she had none—and, when the cold Christmas rains came, Lucius could not go to school for lack of a warm jacket. Claude could not go, anyhow, because he must "mind Baby Sister."

Sometimes this was no easy task; Baby Sister taking perverse and trying notions into her head, and being a stubborn child. On the very day of the plum cake there was Claude to be seen trudging along with Evangeline's red sun-bonnet flunting above his own ragged cap.

"Bliged to wear two hats," says Claude, "'cause Baby Sister will never wear hers."

He says it to Colonel Ormond. Colonel Ormond reins in his horse; he is riding home from the store, and, I daresay, that his bag slung over his saddle-born holds something to help make Christmas merry.

"Mymy! mymy!" exclaims the good-natured man, "you'll catch cold and have pneumonia, sure! Here"—he fishes a brown paper parcel out of his "saddle riders"—"I bought some nice cakes with raisins in for my youngsters. Put your hat right on like a good little girl, and there's one for you. Here's yours, Bud."

The bribe was successful. Baby Sister allowed Claude to tie her bonnet as she munched her cake; but she would not say "thank you," although Claude prompted her. "What do you say, Baby Sister?" And she wouldn't say, "I wish you well, sir," like a polite little Arkansas child, when Colonel Ormond rode away. Not she: she sat down in the cold mud, naughty, rude little Baby Sister, and devoured her plum cake.

"You isn't to set on the ground, Baby Sister," said Claude, pulling at her arms. "Maw said you mustn't! You'll be sure chillin'!"

"Yill set on the ground," remarked Baby Sister, calmly.

Baby Sister was a determined character. She was also fat. Claude knew from experience that he could not carry her half a mile. "And if I slap her she'll lay down flat and beller!" thought he. Therefore, this wise little lad tried diplomacy. "Say, Baby Sister," he said in tones of silken softness, "less we all go look at the circus!"

Baby Sister came up like a bouncing ball, and smiled like a cherub. "Me good now," lisped she.

The *Spectator* publishes the following letter from a schoolboy to his mother. We do not recommend our little folk to take it as a pattern:—

"I hope Matilda's cold is better. I am glad she is not at school. I think I have got consumption. The boys at this place are not gentlemanly, but of course you did not know this when you sent me here. The trowsers have worn out at the knees. I think the tailor must have cheated you, the buttons have come off and they are loose behind. I don't think the food is good, but I should not mind if I was stronger. The piece of meat I send you is off the beef we had on Sunday, but on other days it is more stringy. There are black beads in the kitchen, and sometimes they cook them in the dinner, which can't be wholesome when you are not strong. . . . do not mind my being so uncomfortable because I do not think I shall last long. Please send me some more money as I o 81. if you cannot spare it I can borrow it of a boy who is going to leave at the half quarter, but perhaps you wd. not like to be under an obligation to his parents as they are tradespeople. I think you deal at their shop Yr. loving but retched son."

A city boy to the country gone

Is like a fish on land,—

So many things in the fields and woods

That he dosen't understand.

Last week our Edward—a man of five—

Was out at his uncle's farm,

Where the beasts and the birds, the plants and the weeds,

Had for him a novel charm.

One day at dinner his uncle said:

"What's the matter with Daisy now—

This milk's as blue and tastes as poor

As if it was watered, I vow."

Then up spoke Edward: I know what it is;

For before she was milked by Frank,

She stopped in the creek, on her way to the barn,

And drank, and drank, and drank!"

—Ave Maria.

L. W. BEILLY.

PASSIONIST MISSION IN DUNEDIN.

THE retreat for men, conducted in St Joseph's Cathedral by the Very Rev Father Hilary, O.P., terminated on Sunday evening. The retreat was quite as successful as that for women which had preceded it—if not more so. The church was well filled throughout—the attendance at the 6 a.m. Mass and the following instruction being hardly less full than that at the devotions and sermon in the evening. The missionary began the hearing of confessions on Wednesday morning, and thenceforward was kept busy in that sacred office. There were few, if any, who did not approach the sacraments. On Sunday morning at the 8 a.m. Mass, the body of men who received Holy Communion was a sight not soon to be forgotten. The sermons delivered by the missionary throughout the week were quite as powerful as those to which we alluded in our last issue, and each and all were also heard with wrapt attention. The morning instructions were plain and practical, and so given as likewise to make a lasting impression. On Wednesday evening the Bishop of Christchurch replaced the Very Rev Father Lynch, Rector, in conducting the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was offered every evening for the Most Rev Dr Moran. The Rev Father Murphy throughout the week acted as celebrant of the early Mass. On Tuesday evening the sermon was on temperance. It was distinguished by its moderation and sound sense. For those unable to be temperate, the missionary recommended total abstinence, and for all others rigid rules of temperance, determined on beforehand and faithfully adhered to. He accredited publicans with a power of doing a great deal in the cause by refusing to give drink to those who had had enough. There were many of them, he said, in the Australian cities who were firm in doing so. He advocated complete abstinence for young people under 21 years of age. On this evening, in addition to the men, a number of boys of the Christian Brothers' schools, members of the League of the Cross, were present—sitting room being provided for them on forms placed within the sanctuary. A special feature in the music on this occasion was the singing by Master J. Ward of "Sancta Maria."—On all the evenings hymns were sung by the men, especially that of the Passion beginning with the line, "Oh, come and mourn with me a while." On Friday evening the sermon was on the Passion—preached, the missionary explained, in accordance with the solemn obligation taken upon the preacher during his novitiate—many years ago in Worcestershire—to spread devotion to the Passion of the Saviour. The sermon was most fervent and touching, the awful scenes being described as only one to whose mind's eye they were familiar and vivid could describe them.

On Sunday at the 8 a.m. Mass the church was densely thronged, the Rev Father O'Connor, of Namurkah, Victoria, who was a visitor, in passing, to the city, celebrated Mass, and, at the communion, was assisted by the Very Rev Father Lynch, Rector. We have already spoken of the number of men who were communicants. At the 11 a.m. Mass Father Hilary preached on prayer. The music was Webb's Mass in D, creditably performed by the choir of the Cathedral. In the evening the closing ceremonies took place, men only being admitted to the church—with the exception of the choir, where the lady singers occupied their usual places. The sermon was on perseverance. The very rev preacher also testified to the gratification it had given him to find the retreat so well attended. Hardly anywhere else in Australasia, he said, had he found the men possessed of such a faithful Irish Catholic spirit as that which characterised them in Dunedin. Their good pastors were to be thanked for it. Their good dying Bishop was to be thanked for it—he who had laboured for them and prayed for them and suffered for them. After the sermon the renewal of baptismal vows took place, the men standing up and each holding aloft a lighted candle. The scene in the church was very striking—the high altar having been adorned very beautifully for the occasion by the Dominican nuns. The missionary afterwards bestowed upon those present the Pontifical benediction, which he was commissioned by the Pope to give. Solemn Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament was afterwards given, Father Hilary acting as celebrant with Fathers Lynch and Murphy respectively as deacon and subdeacon. During the week and on this concluding evening Father Lynch had taken down the names of men desirous of becoming members of the Confraternity of the Holy Family—very many in all. The very rev missionary exhorted the members of the Confraternity to attend in their full numbers on Tuesday evening.

In the increased numbers of both confraternities, that of the Holy Family and that of our Lady of Perpetual Succour, we shall have a fitting memorial of the Very Rev Passionist's mission. In other ways, also, the blessings flowing from it will remain with us.—The aid of St Paul of the Cross has not been vainly invoked among us by one of his devoted sons.

The Rev Roaring Kane has been telling the Orangemen in Scotland that "no man is more glaringly inconsistent than the Orangeman who opposes the liberty of conscience and the civil liberty of his fellow-countrymen however that man might be divided from him by political sentiment and religious belief." It can only be said that if this be so, throughout its whole career the Orange institution has perpetually belied its principles.

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